

MYSTERY HILL



Mystery Hill, North Carolina

In the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina, there exists a place of mystery. It lies halfway between the town of Boone and Blowing Rock on U.S. Highway 321. Along this hillside by the middle fork of the New River exists a strange condition of nature -- a quantum, gravitational anomaly that some researchers call a Vortex. This mysterious hillside is more fittingly known as *Mystery Hill*. Thousands of visitors to the site have experienced the weirdness of these strange phenomena since 1949.

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miles of this site and each flows in a different direction. Mystery Hill is situated along one of these -- the New River -- the world's second oldest river. This is the only river known to flow north for any great distance -- all the way to the Ohio, before heading west into the Mississippi. (The world's oldest river is the Nile, which is in an area of the world famous for its own strangeness and unexplainable phenomena.)

Several years ago when U.S. Highway 321 was widened, tons of rock and earth were blasted away from the hillsides. Fossils of marine life were discovered among the rubble and local archeologists are still investigating those discoveries today.

One theory on the strangeness of *Mystery Hill* relates to mineral deposits in the area. When William Hudson began to develop the property in 1949, he thought it must be the heavy mineral composition of the mountain that was altering the normal effects of gravity. This theory was corroborated in 1980 when three retired German scientists conducted dowsing experiments on the site. After several hours of scanning the area, it was concluded that a large iron-ore deposit and two gold veins run beneath the *Mystery Hill* property.

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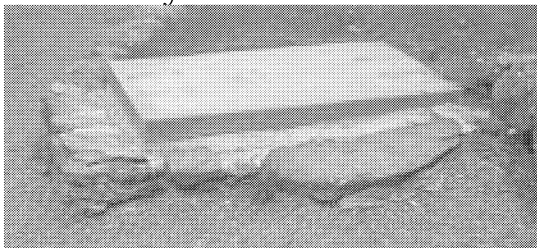
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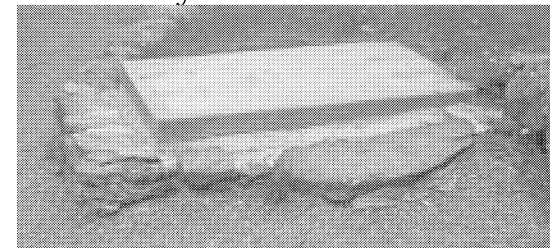
Pine, North Carolina -- the Gem Capital of the World. More gems are found there than anywhere else. Forty miles east is Hiddenite, N.C., where the largest garnets in the world have been found. There were also gold mines scattered throughout the area, around nearby Grandfather Mountain, along Highway 421 and near the Blue Ridge Parkway. It was not uncommon to find gold in the stretch of the New River in front of what is now *Mystery Hill*. Nearby Crystal Mountain, near Hound's Ear, is said to be the source of crystals in clusters so huge they would not fit in the bed of a pick-up truck.

As Hudson developed the property it became increasingly apparent that strange things were occurring. There were apple trees on the property that leaned to the north instead of south and against the prevailing winds. There was a cider press on a wooden platform that was used to make cider from the apples. He employed identical twins to work the press and noticed that regardless of which twin was on the north end of the platform, that twin always looked larger than the one on the south end. Today, the wood has been replaced by concrete and the Mystery Platform continues to baffle visitors on a daily basis.



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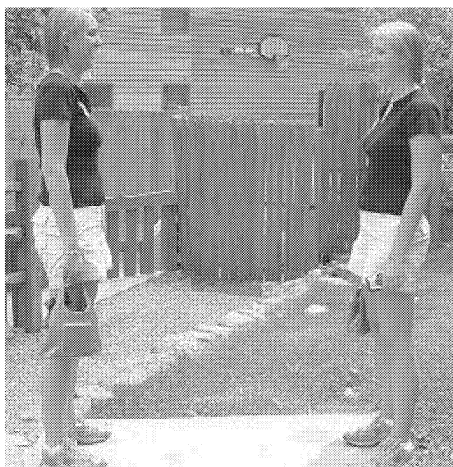




This set of two photos is an example of the “shrink and grow phenomenon”. The woman with the white shorts seems to change height, as she changes ends of the platform, while the other woman stays relatively the same. We believe this is due to the effect of “Fibonacci #5”, which is further explained in the Shapes chapter. In this version, white lines have been drawn to highlight changes in eye level.



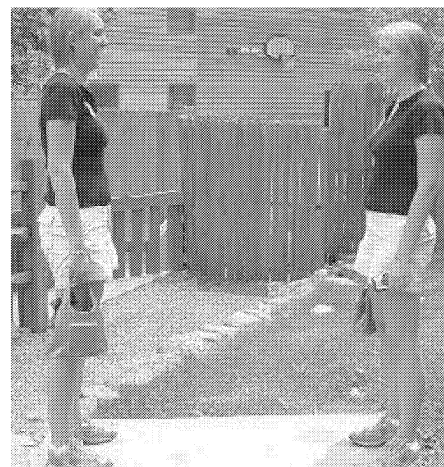
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It was from an article in a 1948 LIFE Magazine that Hudson learned of a similar property on the other side of the country, which was certainly the Mystery Spot in Santa Cruz (since Confusion Hill, further up California Highway 101 was not discovered until 1949). After returning to his mysterious location in the mountains of North Carolina, Hudson built a small cabin among his apple trees on the side of the hill. This structure became known as The Mystery House.

In 1958, Buford Stamey and Rondia J. Underwood were looking for land on which to build a fish camp restaurant. Mr. Underwood purchased the Hudson property and further developed the area. Even after destruction by a devastating fire and other hardships ensued, the Underwood family continues to operate the business as a family-oriented entertainment

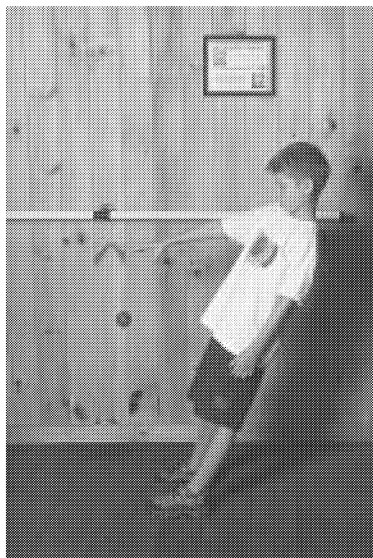


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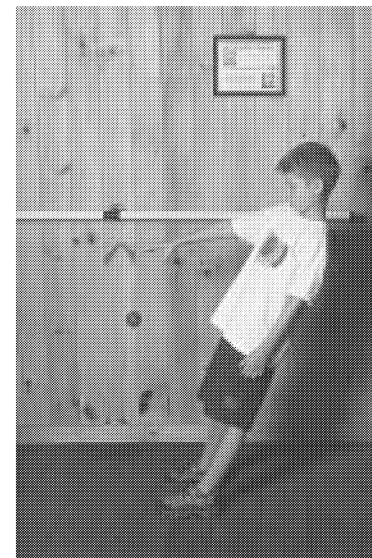
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attraction. They do not typically refer to their mysterious hillside as a vortex but understand that the vortex energy surrounding these areas appears to be going into the earth and not coming from the earth. As a result, what comes from the earth are these rivers and streams and the sources of gold and iron and other minerals and gems.



The original hillside cabin has been rebuilt and is known as The Mystery House. It is often referred to as the crooked shack because of the skewing properties of the vortex. Upon entrance, one experiences a constant lean as though gravity is forcing you to the earth. It's

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like the earth is a magnet and you are made of iron. Those susceptible to motion sickness should be aware that some visitors experience a feeling of motion while standing still. Reports of dizziness, light-headedness, and a feeling of being off-balance are common. It's like trying to walk a straight line on the beach while the waves are receding.

Carpenters performing repairs and routine maintenance reported disorientation and dizziness. There were reports of these skilled laborers hitting their thumbs with hammers (more than usual). They found they could not perform routine carpentry tasks. After a few hours they became disoriented and realized they could not account for the work they had performed. One worker arrived late for work one day and cited the reason -- lack of sleep. He said he had to keep one foot on the floor beside his bed to keep the room from spinning.

Within the Mystery House normal parametric references are absent and one's judgment becomes questionable. Upward direction can be construed as down and what should be a downward direction appears to be up! A good example is the curving ball demonstration, which will astonish and amaze. (Just try to toss the ball straight up into the air.) Other anomalies include reports of a humming in the ears when resting one's back against one of the walls of the cabin. Brooms, walking sticks or other such objects will stand

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on end without visible support. Some have reported a feeling of disorientation and others, a closeness to the earth never before felt.

There are a lot of interesting things to see and do at *Mystery Hill* that will have you thinking a bit differently afterwards. There are illusions and mind benders and puzzles. But there is a reality of what is seen and experienced that cannot be denied. Although now it is concrete, the site of the old, wooden cider press platform is the only height change demonstration provided. Thought by some to be merely an optical illusion, The Mystery Platform must be seen, felt and experienced before drawing a conclusion. This is true for the entire *Mystery Hill* experience.

Exiting the main highway and crossing the river is enough for many visitors to realize that “something’s different”. The first indication is that the river appears to be flowing uphill -- North! This is especially true if you are coming from the sand hills or foothills of North or South Carolina. After spending an hour or more of traveling up the mountain, you see the river flowing in the same direction you have been traveling. From there, you are not quite sure what to expect.

So if this is such a mystery, why are scientists not trying to understand and comprehend these anomalies? Could it be fear in identifying concepts that do not fit the mold of conventional science? Perhaps. There have

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been small attempts to venture into the unknown and attempt to explain the phenomena at *Mystery Hill*.

About ten years ago, members of a local college visited the site to conduct trials and experiments that may help explain the anomalies. The investigators installed leveled tripods equipped with swinging pendulums that were measured by gradients to mark the sway. Imagine their amazement when the pendulums moved freely to one side but were stopped by an invisible restriction on the other! Although the oddity was measured and documented, there has been no theory or explanation presented. This effect can be experienced firsthand using the swing that is provided in The Mystery House.

In 1980, the Appalachian State University Physics Department theorized that it was merely an optical illusion when people standing on the Mystery Platform appeared uneven in height due to the buildings, fences or uneven terrain (depending upon the line of sight or literal point of view). They set out to prove the theory by erecting an optical grid between observers and students of the same height. Upon conducting the experiment, the grid work seemed to heighten the height change effect! At the end of the day, more scientists left *Mystery Hill* scratching their heads and letting the phenomenon they witnessed remain unchallenged.

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Mystery Hill offers only self-guided tours, but the owner will sometimes happily tag along and help show off the mysteries. His explanations about the site are always educational, enlightening and entertaining. This is also true of the museum and the gift shop. Take it all in to experience the total *Mystery Hill* experience.



Appalachian Heritage Museum

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